

I reported yesterday about several ways in which the Facebook user interface makes it quite difficult to report vendors who post misleading or scam ads. I reported specifically on an ad run by Jinnie Store, which seems to be a recently established Facebook storefront (est. March 10, 2019, based apparently in Vietnam). My issues with the ad shown are as follows:

- The item shown in the video is not the same as the item depicted in the linked dScarf website. [Motor in the video has six sides, motor on the website has four, among many other differences.]
- When I reported the discrepancy to the Jinnie Store via a politely worded comment, they silently deleted the comment within an hour without responding or addressing the product mismatch.
- Although outside the purview of Facebook to be sure, I also noted that when viewing the item on dScarf, all sorts of bogus sales info is presented every five seconds for folks in your area who have purchased the item at various times in the past six hours.

These do not sound like legitimate or wholesome business practices, and I spent a bit of time documenting all of this and warning local residents of Prescott, Arizona to be aware of these ads which were running with fairly high intensity (I received two Jinnie Store ads within two hours,

in fact).

I do not know if Facebook has responded to my two “Report this ad” alerts. But I do know there are several parts of the Facebook GUI which impede users from accessing or reporting such ads. This “Report a Problem” filing is less about the Jinnie Store ad, which I have reported •again• this morning, but rather has to do with these user interface issues where ads and reporting ads is concerned.

In addition to the list of issues, I reported separately via a “Report a Problem” filing, I spotted another one this morning.

Ads are somewhat volatile in nature... they appear on your News Feed and you can skip them or engage with them as I did yesterday to post that little comment saying the product shown in the video did not match the product shown on the website. I should’ve made an “Embed” to save the location of that ad because it was only by happenstance that a couple of hours later the same ad appears, and I spotted the same comments from other users and could see that my comment had been deleted.

Most users will not know how to use Embed to save an ad, and they seem to be algorithmically generated in such a way that if you return to your News Feed later, they may not appear at the same place. The News Feed suggests a

positional relationship to the user of articles and ads seen, and for the most part posts by my friends stay roughly the same, but the ads may come and go.

Furthermore, and this is the main point of this “Report a Problem”, another way of locating the ad, by going to the “Jinnie Store” page and then looking at the “Info and Ads” tab does not let me access the comments (screenshot) despite the fact that the ad is running in my area and I might want to supply feedback there to show that the products do not match to warn others of the sketchy nature of this vendor. But that route is blocked to me... to provide that feedback directly to users. Instead, my only recourse is to warn Facebook about the situation who may or may not intervene in a timely or proper manner.

Of two ads running yesterday, only one remains, but it is identical to the first. Did one ad expire? Did Facebook stop one ad but leave the other? I cannot tell. My “Report this ad” does not show any activity beyond the fact that the review process was started.

I do not consider this form of “monolithic black box” consumer reporting and protection to be adequate to safeguard the Facebook community, not by a long shot. The issues of Jennie Store are relatively minor, but it is clear that in the end Facebook is relatively non-responsive and non-caring of such issues, which is why I am documenting these issues and will likely file a report with

the Federal Trade Commission on this matter next week.

I am logging all communications with Facebook on this matter to this public domain archive:

<<https://archive.org/details/20190424FormalComplaintOnFacebookConsumerReportingPolicies>>

I hope some consideration will be made about my concerns that Facebook's consumer protection policies and feedback mechanisms need considerable review and are currently woefully inadequate.

Yours sincerely,

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